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A Heretofore Article.

This is not much of a government. We mean the contrivance called the Constitution. No one need talk to us about the wisdom of the fathers of the Constitution, and accuse Providence of having a hand in it. If the fathers were any wiser than people are now, the breed is running out, which we do not believe. If any body believes that he has degenerated, he is entitled to his opinion; only he should stop propagating abroad that running out. And if Providence had a hand in it, the work would have been better done. That is orthodox enough for the most rigid.

The Constitution was a failure from the start in the most prominent thing, the election of President; the feature on which a double portion of the aforesaid wisdom was expended. It soon required amendment, but now it is nothing but a trap. Nothing so Utopian was ever imagined by the most fancy French Republican dreamer. Think of a parcel of wise fathers putting their wise heads together and contriving a plan by which the people were to select a few of the wisest men among them, to meet together and after wise and mature deliberation, choose the wisest man in the nation to be President.

Thus the wisdom of the whole people was bottled down into a few electors, and their wisdom was to be concentrated in the choice of a President. In this way the result was expected to be vastly wiser than if the people voted directly for President.

Originally, a person having a majority of the electoral vote was to be President, and the one having the next highest number was to be Vice-President. This provision elected a Vice-President against a majority of the vote; certainly a novelty in a popular Government. It supposed, also, that because a man was a candidate for President, he would be glad to get the Vice-Presidency. There should have been an additional provision that if he got neither the Presidency nor the Vice-Presidency, he should have a clerkship in one of the Departments, or one of the President's old coats. This was amended when it was found to work badly, and electors were allowed to vote directly for Vice-President, making a small part of the wisdom, which the contrivance was to secure, to directness.

The way the thing works now, every body knows. A President may have a majority of the electoral votes, and a minority of the people. Even when but two candidates are voted for, the President may be elected against a large majority of the popular vote. This is a pleasing feature for a popular Government. In fact the wisdom of the fathers seemed to consist chiefly in traps to circumvent the popular will. In the recent election the fate of the nation was said to depend on New York. That is a beautiful Government, which hangs by the election of a single State. New York decided the election of President. If the division of parties had been as close in New York as it often is in most of the States, one or two thousand votes thrown in there from other States would have decided the fate of the nation. And this could easily be done, if voters were of no value in the other States. If the election had been close in New York, does any one suppose that this trap would not have been sprung effectively?

A variety of circumstances can naturally occur in which an election would be as much a fraud upon the people as if it had been done by the little joker and the only providential thing in the matter is our escape from the dangers of the Presidential contrivance. Another specimen of the wisdom of the contrivance fathers was their allowing the concentrated wisdom of the electors to vote but once, and then throwing the election into the House. An officer, having 60,000 votes in his gift, many of them being worth fortunes to the incumbents, and carrying with them high position at home and abroad, may hang by a single vote in the House of Representatives. And this contrivance was made by men who quoted Roman history, and who had read how Roman Emperors bought their election with the spoils of the Empire. Yet they had to deal with many thousands men, while a candidate for President, with all the patronage of this Government in his gift, may only have to approach a dozen, or even a single one, and if a minority candidate, he will only have to pay higher for his election.

The only election that has been made in the House convulsed the Government. But then the patronage of the President was not a tithe of what it is now, and the nation was much more homogeneous in feeling than now. Yet the Government was in real danger, and people talked of arming and marching to Washington. The election by the electors is full of possible danger; but a failure on their part, throwing the election into the House, would be a crisis which would peril the very existence of the nation.

There is no sense in talking about the superhuman wisdom of the fathers, when their work was so ridiculous. The fathers, when they set up their doings and sayings as the standard to which all wisdom and statesmanship, and governmental science must be adjusted, is positively dangerous. It entails a perpetual danger on us, and calls it wisdom almost divine. It puts on us the breeches of a boy as the standard of manhood, and restrains our growth to them.

As it seems to be the province of the Press to puncture venerable humbug, we wish it understood that the wisdom of the fathers of the Constitution does not pass in this country, only as proven by their works. We would just as soon set up a calf, and call it God, as the Hebrews did, as to set up a foolish work of the fathers and call it wisdom, and the hand of Providence, and all that sort of thing. The mode of electing President should be changed now, while the country is enjoying unusual quiet and harmony, without waiting for a revolution to bring it about. The President should be elected directly by the people, and in no other way on any contingency. Then the Senators should be elected by the people, instead of being subject to tricks and leading in the Legislature. This would be a fair beginning. In time, in spite of the burden entailed by the wisdom of the fathers, we may be able to make this into a sensible Government.

Miller, the coffee-house keeper whom Col. Ruckstuhl, the German editor, shot some weeks since in Louisville, Ky., died on Wednesday from the wound.

Popular Sovereignty in Europe.
It is queer the white popular sovereignty has just died out in Democratic America, in Europe it has assumed a supremacy which the reddest Republican never imagined here. It even disposes of nationalities and adjusts boundaries and revises the map of Europe. Victor Emmanuel's recent proclamation thus shows how he regretted to part with the two Italian Provinces, which he found necessary to transfer to Louis Napoleon, and which we suppose was the interpretation of that "union of nationalities," and that "united kingdom of Italy," which was proclaimed as the glorious object of the Italian crusade. But popular sovereignty was supreme, and he was compelled to bow in submission. Having raked down pretty handsomely by the popular-sovereignty dodge, he could not refuse to share with a comrade. There is honor among thieves; and should be to some extent among sovereigns.

"By accepting from the popular right these fine and noble provinces, I must loyally recognize the application of that principle, nor could I measure it by the rule of my private feelings and interests. In support of that principle, I, for the good of Italy, made the sacrifice which cost my heart the dearest I possessed two most noble provinces of the kingdom of my ancestors."

It is evident that the great Napoleon was a bull-head, compared with his mythical nephew. With his popular-sovereignty contrivance, Louis Napoleon could "discount" his uncle, and beat him, in the game of annexation. The mind can hardly compass the might of this principle. In our own country, for instance, suppose South Carolina should vote for annexation to France, as it is reported she desires; of course this Government would have to submit; and if it did not, Louis Napoleon would owe it to the moral sentiment of the world to bring his army over here and vindicate the great principle of popular sovereignty against Democratic tyranny. There are Florida and Texas also; we paid a pretty high price for them, and have sunk considerable money in the petulant wars of Florida. Texas, or at least Wiggall, talks of selling out again, and Florida is not well satisfied since her Indian war resources stopped. Should they vote for annexation to France, of course we could not resist popular sovereignty, and Louis Napoleon could not choose but take possession, leaving us to whistle for our investment.

But there are only a sprinkling. Venetia would vote for annexation to anything, to escape Austria. That being accomplished, the vote again, and eventually might suit herself. Hungary would vote to better herself. So would Poland. Ireland might annex itself to France. In fact, a trial of popular sovereignty there has been suggested in one of those pamphlets which are put out occasionally as feelers for Louis Napoleon. Syria is already being prepared for popular sovereignty by French intervention. The principle has only to be started on this continent in Central and South America, to run like fire over a prairie.

Drawing it Mild.
The Dolbear Commercial College, of New Orleans, advertises for several teachers of scientific branches, with the following proviso: "N. B.—No female, who thinks it right to steal, rob and murder, need apply." This, really, is an ingenious and polite adaptation of the vernacular to the condition of society. Next, we shall hear gentlemen who make war with their neighbors' goods, characterized as enthusiasts. Horse-thieves will be called progressives, and forgers will be described as devotees to literature. Murderers will be called over-zealous, or men of a single idea. These college terms are a great improvement on the flash phrases hitherto in vogue in the light-colored profession. It seems by the special notice that this class of gentry has heretofore been freely admitted into the professorships of the Dolbear Commercial College, and that the Directory have grown unaccountably fastidious. It is a question whether they can sustain so stringent a rule.

A Medical Consultation on the Union.
The Southern students in the New York Medical University have held a meeting to consider the question of secession. There was no action, but the question was left for decision at some future meeting. This important item will be found in our dispatches. It is fortunate that they left the question open. What if they had decided it? It is dreadful to think of. It is singular that professional habits did not lead these sucking suckers to proceed to amputate the Union at once. Perhaps they thought best to administer a purge or a vomit first. If they would take themselves off, it would be a pretty good imitation of the latter.

"Macheth" expressed a great want of doctors who could "treat the water of the land, find out his disease, and purge it to a pristine vigor." These Southern sons of phreatic could have done the business for him. It is interesting to see how ambition stimulates every profession to new conquests. Doctors used to be content with taking off the people singly. Now these medical students propose to cut off whole States.

Yancey Omelette.
The Atlanta (Ga.) Confederacy states that Mr. Douglas was egged, on his entrance into Montgomery, Alabama, the place of Mr. Yancey's residence. In his speech in this city, Mr. Yancey promised that any Northern man who visited his section should meet a hospitable reception, unless he tried to steal their "niggers." It necessarily follows that either Mr. Douglas tried to steal niggers in Montgomery, or this is what Mr. Yancey calls Southern hospitality.

JOHN W. FORNEY has taken time by the forelock, and in an editorial in the Philadelphia Press has shown Mr. Lincoln how he should conduct the Government. It is so important that the Gazette has it by special dispatch. If we are to have an Administration controlled by Mr. Forney's advice, we should have elected him President. It is always preferable to have things direct, than at second hand. Mr. Forney has not distinguished his political wisdom so highly in his own course, that he need to assume to advise Mr. Lincoln.

A NEW FRAY-TOE—Bos-Constrictor Boots. At the last meeting of the French Academy of Sciences, Dr. Jules Cloquet produced a pair of boots made of the tanned skin of a Bos-constrictor. This material is remarkably strong and supple; the scales have preserved their natural imbrication and color, after the process of tanning, and the scales of the skin display the marks of the scales in alternate relief and depression. Dr. Cloquet observed that it would be desirable to make further attempts to introduce the skins of the inferior vertebrata into trade, seeing that, as to thickness and durability, they decidedly offer greater advantages than those of the superior classes.

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Very Drift Duel in New Orleans.—The combatants were a French and an American. The New Orleans correspondent of the St. Louis Republic relates this amusing story of a late duel in the former city: "One of the funniest duels that I ever heard of, came off a few days ago on the Grand Canal, the principals being two young French Creoles of the Second District, Messieurs St. Rome and Carriere. Their cause of action dates back a twelvemonth or more, and has its origin in an accusation preferred by C. against St. R., of having written a letter to the 'Life in Boston,' in which he maligned the character of the Creoles in a highly respectable young lady of this city. A challenge from Carriere to St. R. was followed, and the latter at once proved beyond all question his facility for doing extraordinary things. To the horror and amusement of every on-looker, he chose flint-lock pistols for the weapons, and that was worse, the challenge was bound to submit to this inconceivable, old-foggy notion, and take the chance of popping his man off with a weapon that might not go off at all, and if it did, would certainly go—just as they are at the usual place of fighting, and endeavor to preserve the utmost courtesy and the extreme of stoical composure. The preliminaries were arranged, and they were put in position. The word was given 'Gentlemen, are you ready?' 'Ready!' 'Fire—two—three!' and a simultaneous click, click of the two ineffectual old flintlocks was the only response to the dreadful summons, while the two combatants ducked their heads, in anticipation of the tardy leaden messengers. There was not even a flash in the pan. Carriere, however, decided to pick their flints and try it again. Again Carriere's pistol, like an obstinate mule, refused to go. St. R., also, gave a click, and then, as if changing his mind, discharged a cloud of smoke from the barrel, followed by another from the muzzle, and a stunning report, like that of a heavily-loaded musket. Nobody was hurt, and Carriere's second time with the water was over, concluding that it was wasting time to fight when he couldn't get a shot, and stood no chance of being hit himself. He, however, took the flint from the water into the water, and as a good joke in high dudgeon—swore terribly at his bad luck—entreated pitiously for another chance—thought he could fix 'the flint' so that it would go next time." "And represented to the dreadful summons, the injustice of being shot at and not permitted to have an answering crack at his enemy. It was all in vain; his seconds refused to act, and the other party destroyed his last hope by withdrawing from the well-fought field."

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Alleged Outrageous Conduct of a Steamboat Captain—His Inhumanity to the Passengers of the H. R. W. Hill.
The New Orleans correspondent of the St. Louis Republic says: "A good deal of indignation is expressed here against Captain J. F. Hicks, of the steamer John Smith, who is charged with inhumanity quite as shocking and more atrocious as that alleged against the captain of the Ben Lewis on the occasion of the Cairo disaster. After the explosion of the steamer Hill, which was destroyed, into which the victims had been brought, rang with the groans and cries of the poor scalded wretches, some of them dying, and others suffering the most intense agony, Hicks, who was urged by the officers and passengers of the Hill, to tow the wreck down to the city, where medical aid could be procured in time to save the lives of those for whom there was any hope. The Captain was deaf to every appeal; he positively refused to do anything of the sort, but contented himself with passing by the wreck. He was, he said, bound up the river; his boat drew a great deal of water; the river was falling, and the time he most lost in going back fifty miles might prove fatal to his trip. The Captain's conduct, the wreck, with its ghastly freight of human misery, did not reach the city for the space of rather more than thirty-six hours, and in the meantime several of the sufferers had died who might have been saved by an earlier application of the proper remedies. The passengers of the Hill and those of the Ben Lewis, who were living in the wreck, were taken to the city, and the conduct of Capt. Hicks is rather mild terms, considering the nature of the charges against him."

Employment in Indiana—A Husky of a Wife Follows her Husband and Plays the Devil.—Yesterday's Indianapolis papers relate the following: "One day last week a married man, Mr. George Rice, who lived in the eastern part of the city, and who had a very large family, was naturally indignant at the loss of her husband's affections, and Mr. Rice at the loss of his property, and on Monday last the wife accompanied by several of her children, went to the residence of her husband, and, after a long and bitter quarrel, she seized the hand of her husband, and, with a pistol, and called loudly for George to escape. George did secure his pants and coat and ran so fast that he had not been caught yet, but the girl paid dearly for the escape of her husband. Mrs. Rice had brass knuckles in her other hand with which she beat the poor girl unmercifully about the head, cutting her flesh about the face. Mr. Rice recovered the property, and Mrs. Rice lost her husband."

Another Nautical Monster—A Vessel Half as Long Again as the Great Eastern.—An official report has been published, in England, of a river steam vessel belonging to the Oriental India Steam Navigation Co., and intended to navigate the shallow rivers of the East, which possesses peculiar scientific interest from the fact of this composite vessel being the longest ever yet constructed, being nearly half as long again as the Great Eastern. It appears that on trial this great vessel, or train, was found to be easily manageable, and attained a satisfactory rate of speed, and its successful navigation is a problem how to carry a very large cargo on a very small draught of water, against a rapid stream. The train consists of a steamer and five barges, each of 1,000 tons, and 900 feet. But these barges, instead of being towed as usual by common barges, are joined to one another by circular joints, like a hinge, so that the whole train is a single flexible vessel, with only one bow and one stern. The purpose of this arrangement is to obtain the necessary displacement, with small resistance, and without risk of damage, should the vessel get stuck in the shallows, as these conditions are effectually fulfilled by the arrangement adopted. The train is thirty feet broad and seven feet deep. At a draught of water of three feet it can carry about 3,000 tons of cargo. Such a vessel is greatly needed at the present moment to carry up railway materials in India, and to bring down cotton, flax and other articles of agricultural produce.

A NEW FRAY-TOE—Bos-Constrictor Boots. At the last meeting of the French Academy of Sciences, Dr. Jules Cloquet produced a pair of boots made of the tanned skin of a Bos-constrictor. This material is remarkably strong and supple; the scales have preserved their natural imbrication and color, after the process of tanning, and the scales of the skin display the marks of the scales in alternate relief and depression. Dr. Cloquet observed that it would be desirable to make further attempts to introduce the skins of the inferior vertebrata into trade, seeing that, as to thickness and durability, they decidedly offer greater advantages than those of the superior classes.

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